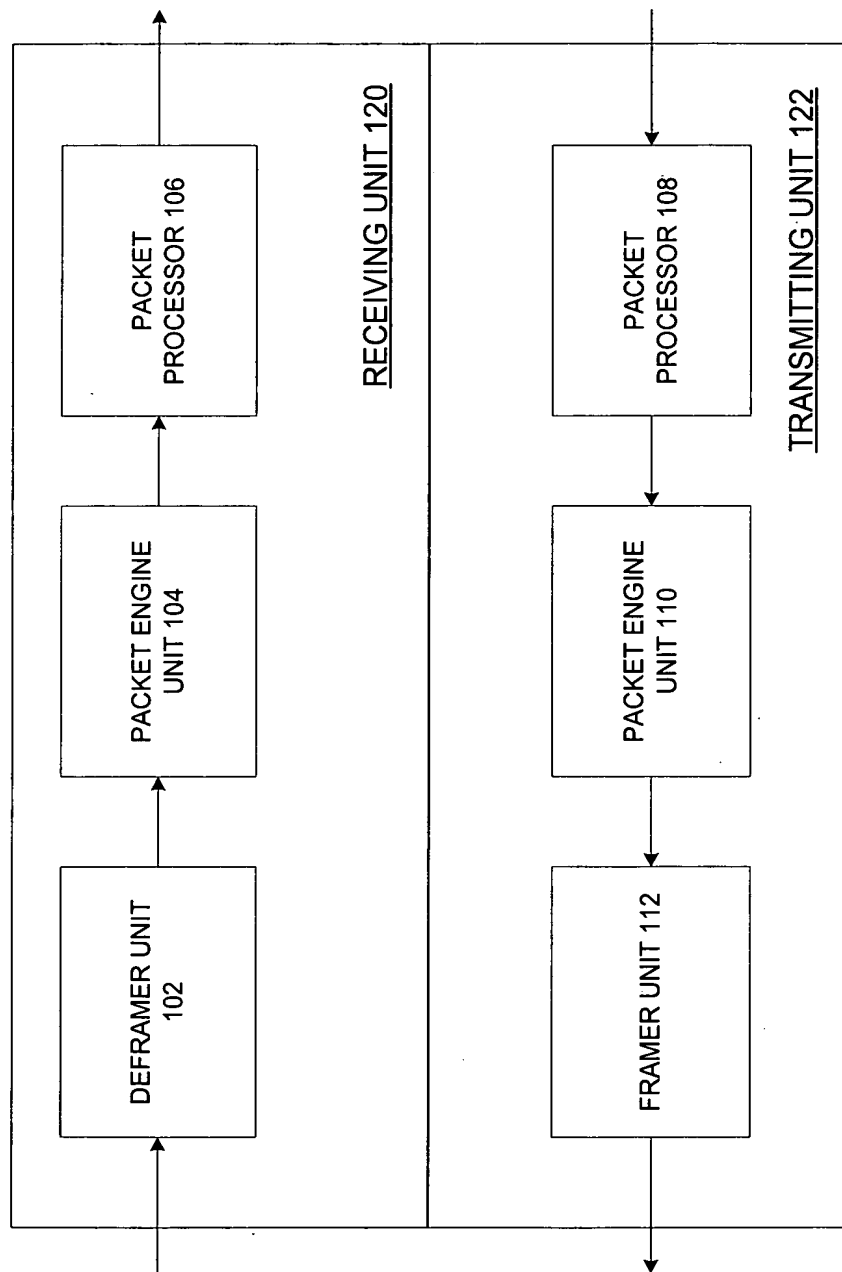


FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a line card 100 in accordance with the present invention. The line card 100 includes a receiving unit 120 and a transmitting unit 122. The receiving unit 120 includes a deframer unit 102, a packet engine unit 104, and a packet processor 106. The transmitting unit 122 includes a framer unit 112, a packet engine unit 110, and a packet processor 108. The line card 100 is connected to a network 101.



LINE CARD 100

FIG. 1 (prior art)

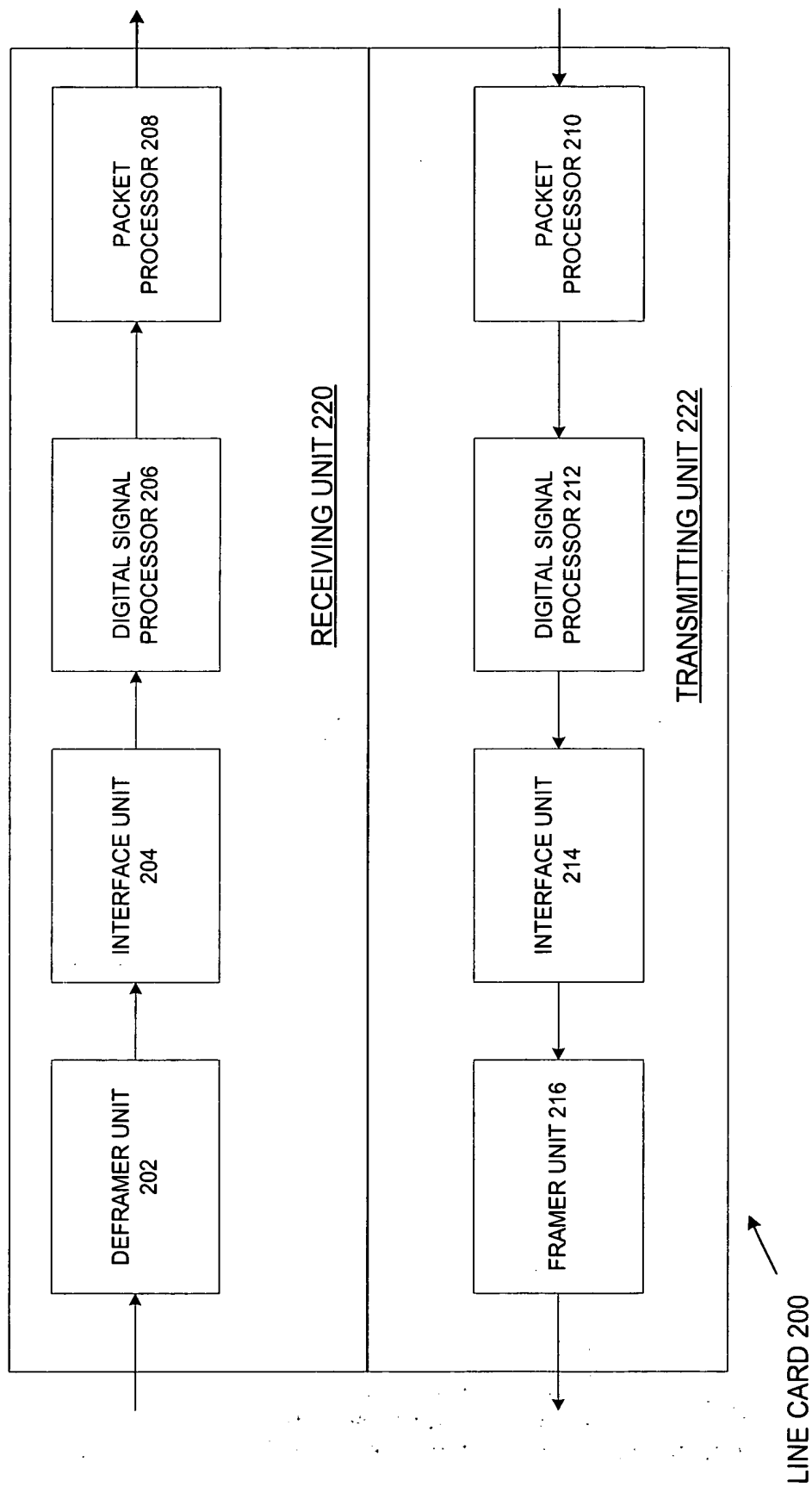


FIG. 2 (prior art)

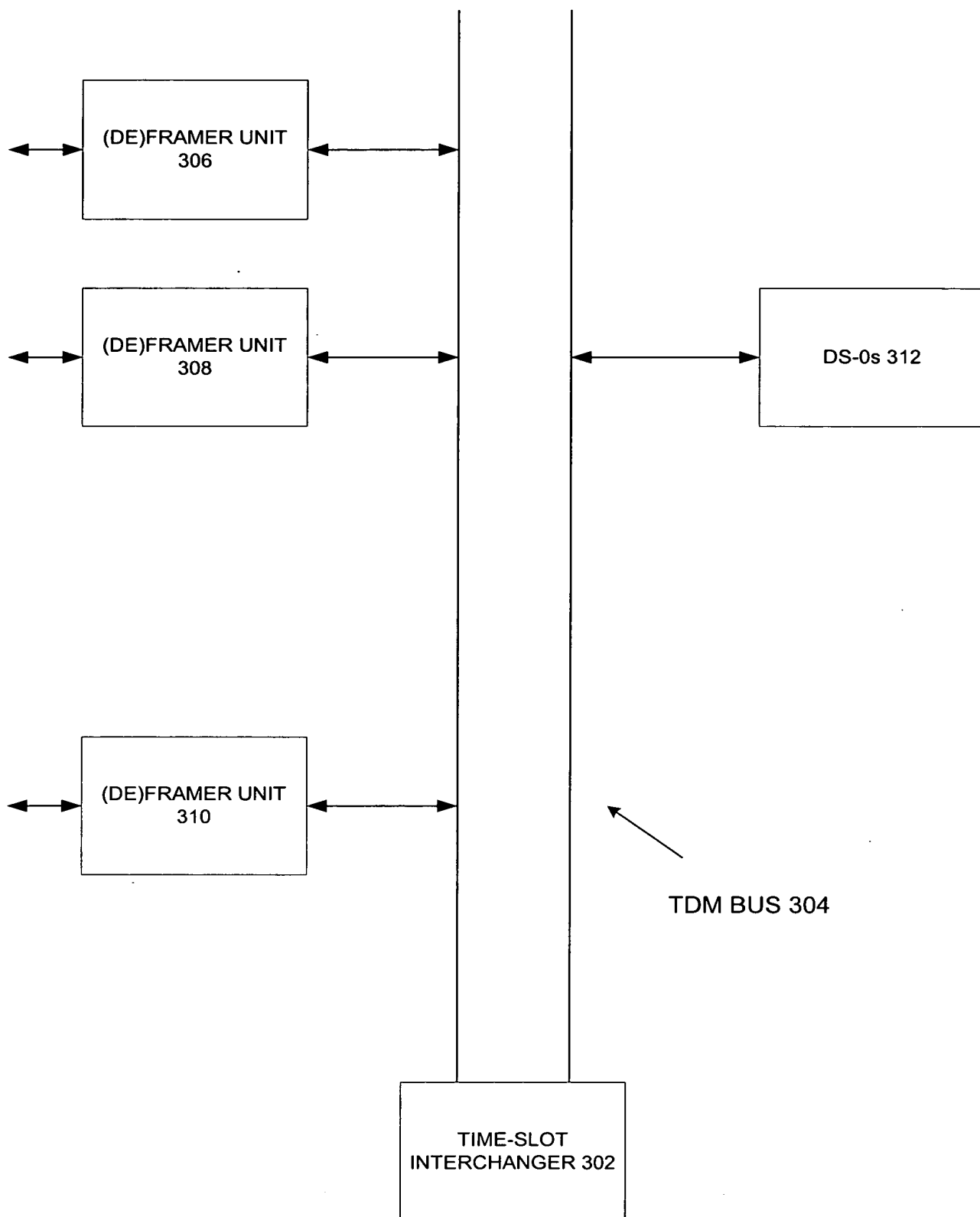


FIG. 3 (prior art)

SYSTEM 400

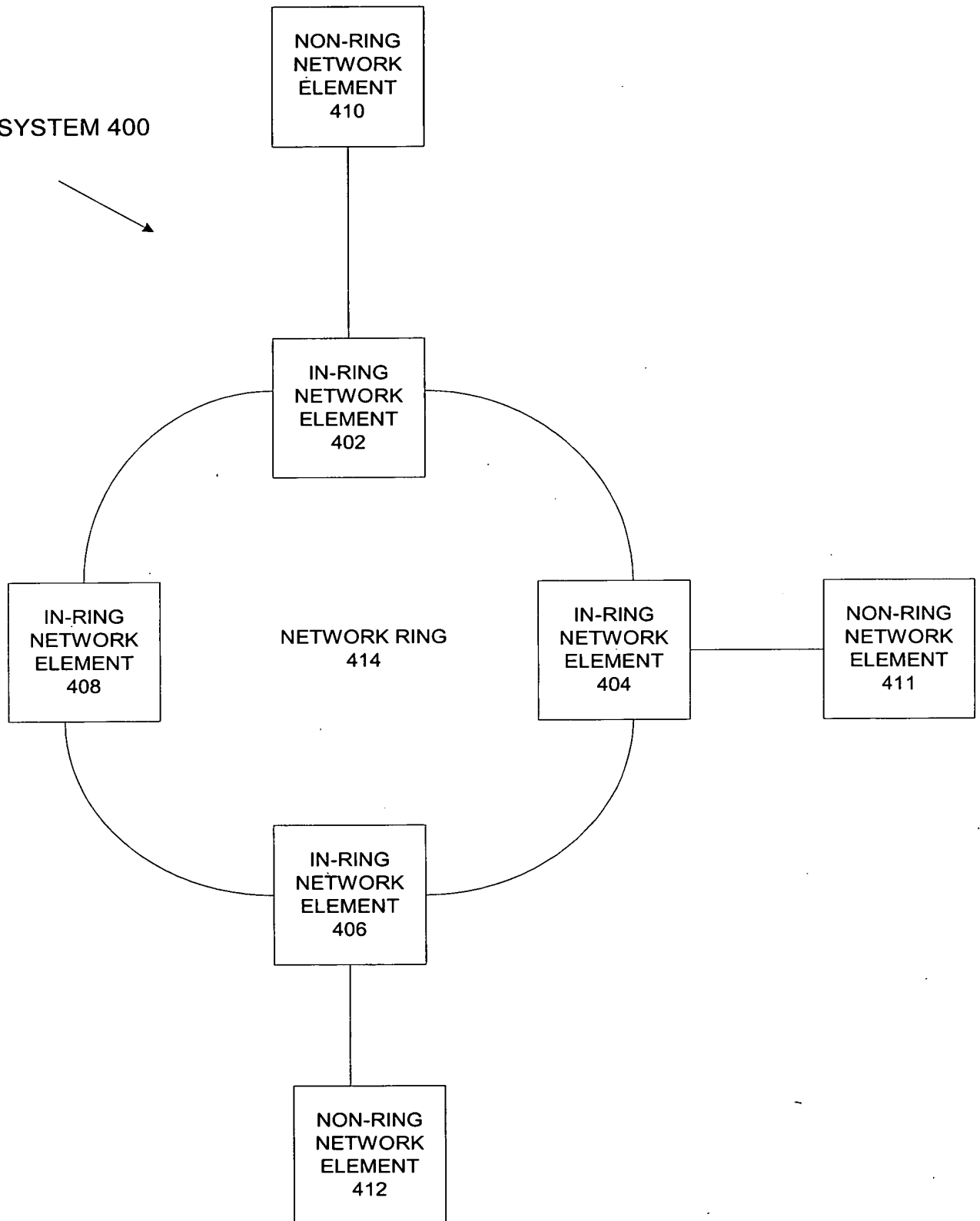


FIG. 4

FIG. 5 is a block diagram of a network element 402-408, showing four line cards (502a, 502b, 502c, 502d) and a control card (520). Each line card contains ingress and egress packet processing circuitry (512, 514) and physical connection circuitry (510). The line cards are interconnected via a packet mesh (526). The control card (520) contains TDM switching circuitry (516) and is connected to the line cards via dashed lines.

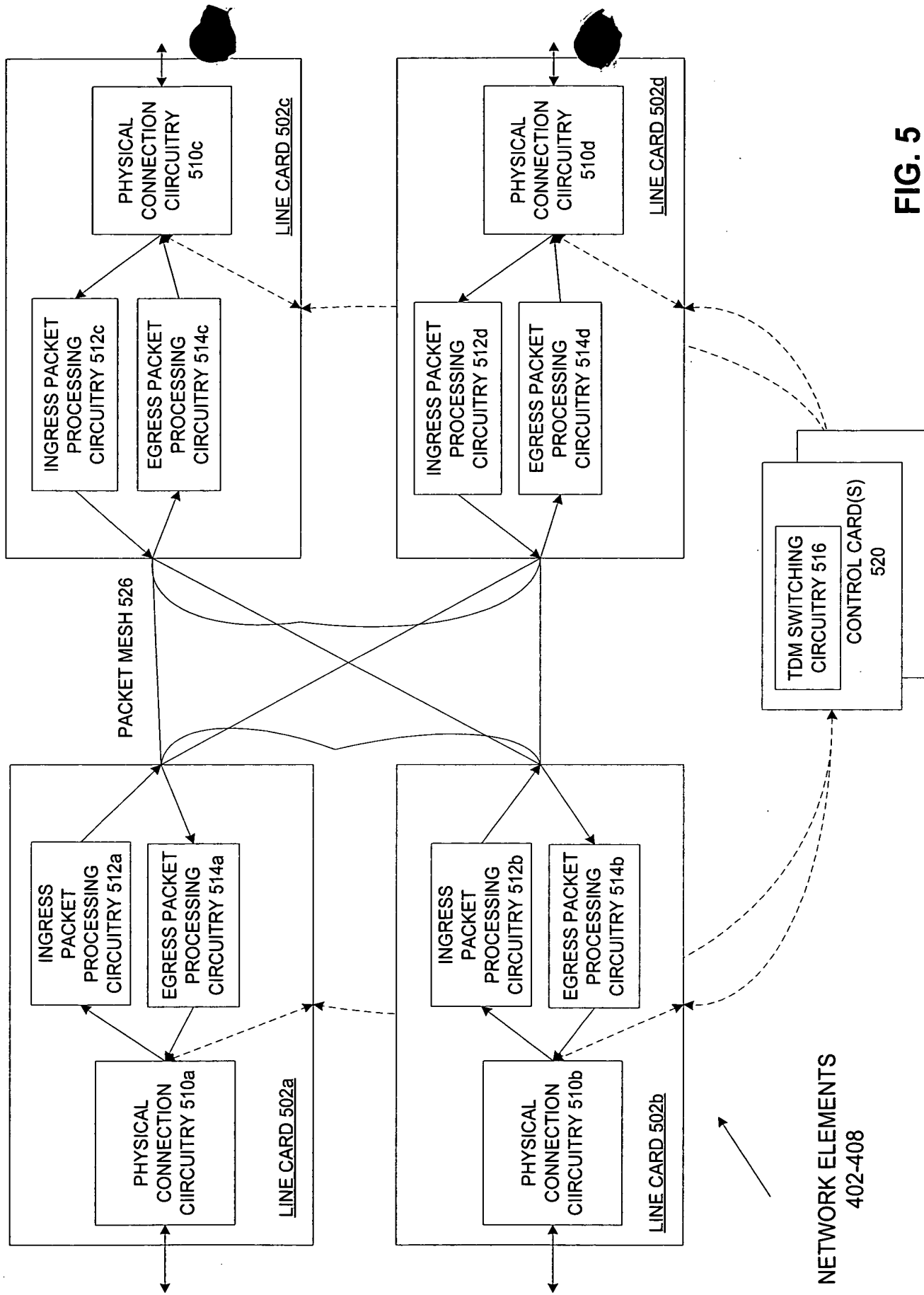


FIG. 5

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of a line card 502, which is a type of physical connection circuitry 510. The line card 502 is shown as a rectangular block containing several processing units. The diagram is divided into two main sections by a vertical dashed line 652. The left section is labeled 'INGRESS UNIT 620' and the right section is labeled 'EGRESS UNIT 622'. The left section contains a 'DEFRAMER UNIT 602' and a 'PACKET ENGINE UNIT 604'. The right section contains a 'FRAMER UNIT 612', a 'PACKET ENGINE UNIT 610', and a 'PACKET PROCESSOR 608'. The 'PACKET PROCESSOR 606' is located at the bottom of the left section. The 'PACKET PROCESSOR 608' is located at the bottom of the right section. The 'PACKET ENGINE UNIT 604' and 'PACKET ENGINE UNIT 610' are connected to the 'PACKET PROCESSOR 606' and 'PACKET PROCESSOR 608' respectively. The 'DEFRAMER UNIT 602' and 'FRAMER UNIT 612' are connected to the 'PACKET ENGINE UNIT 604' and 'PACKET ENGINE UNIT 610' respectively. The 'INGRESS PACKET PROCESSING CIRCUITRY 512' and 'EGRESS PACKET PROCESSING CIRCUITRY 514' are indicated by dashed lines. The 'PHYSICAL CONNECTION CIRCUITRY 510' is indicated by a dashed line. The 'LINE CARD 502' is indicated by a dashed line. The '650' is indicated by a dashed line. The '652' is indicated by a dashed line. The '630', '632', '634', '636', '638', and '640' are indicated by dashed lines.

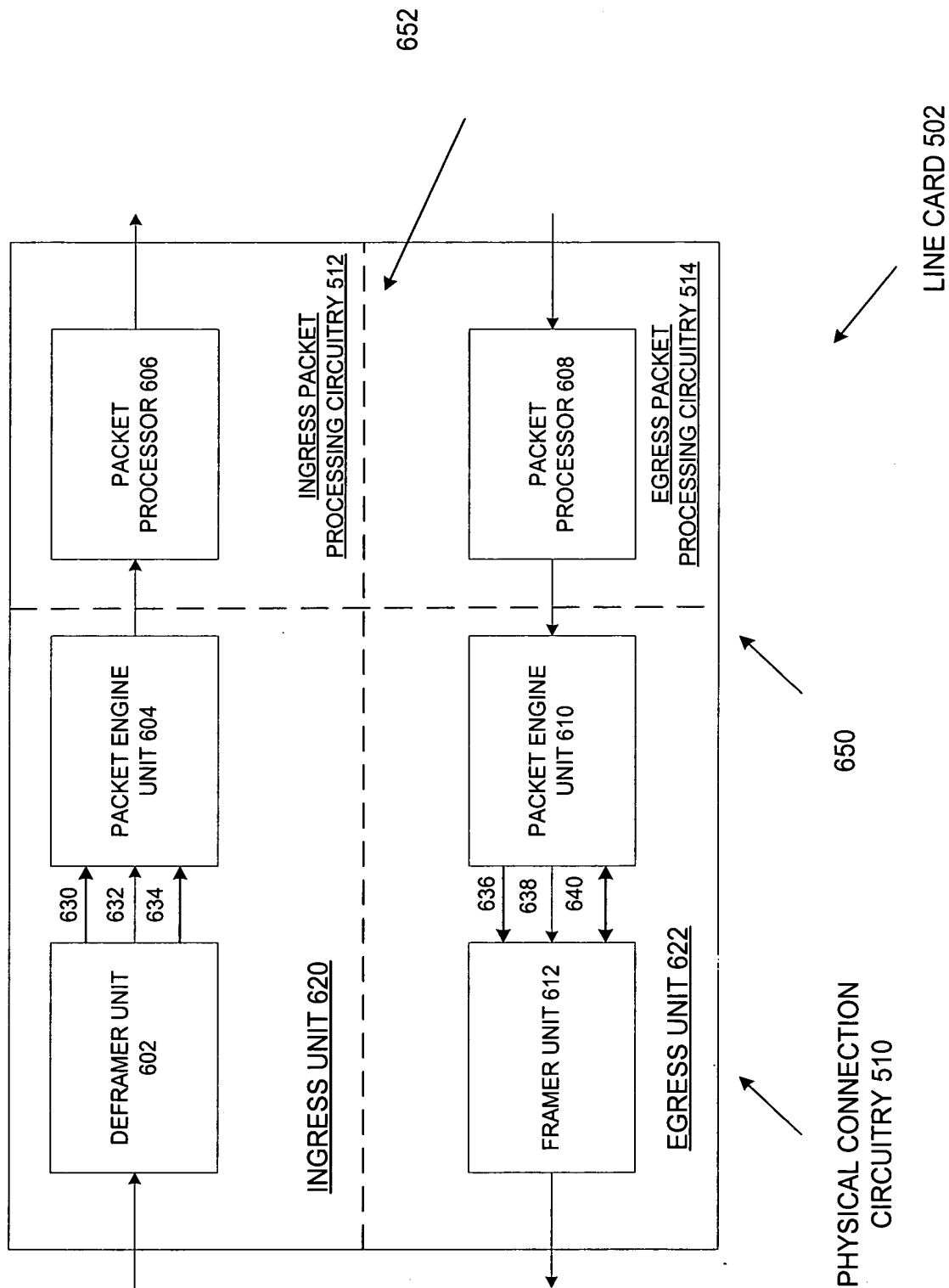


FIG. 6

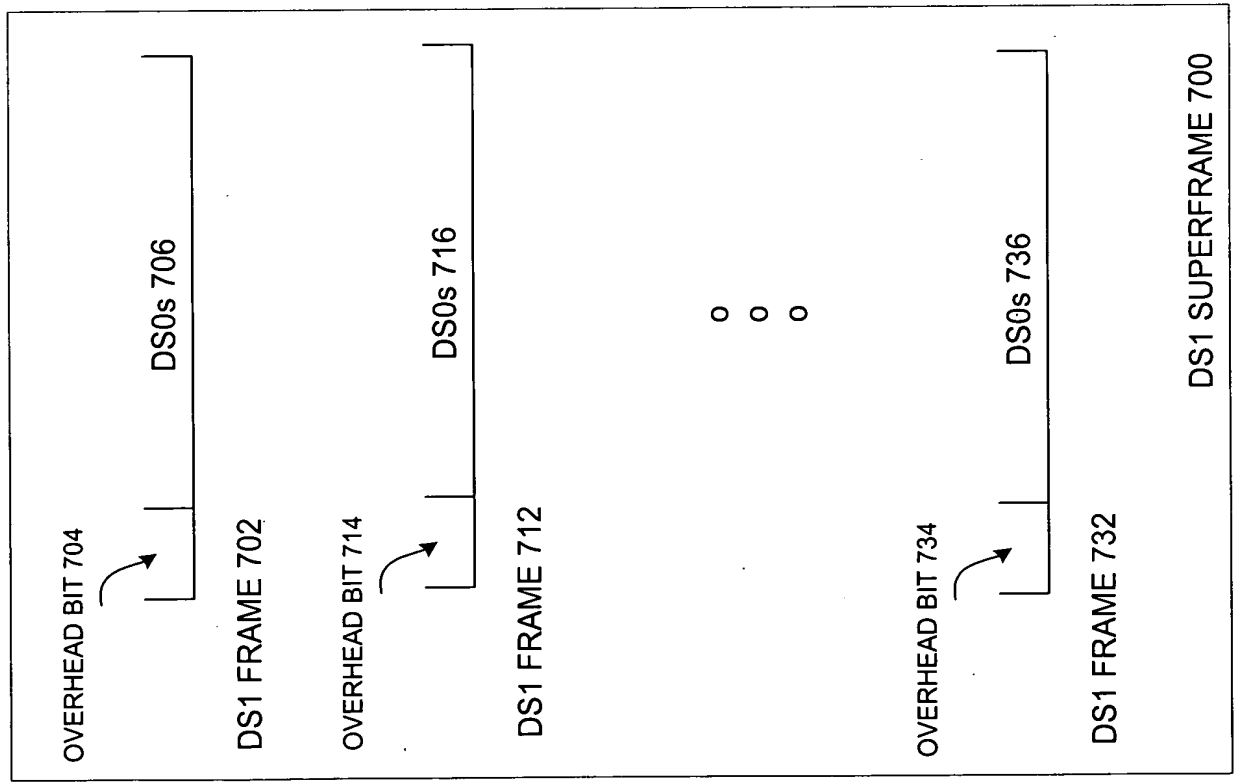


FIG. 7

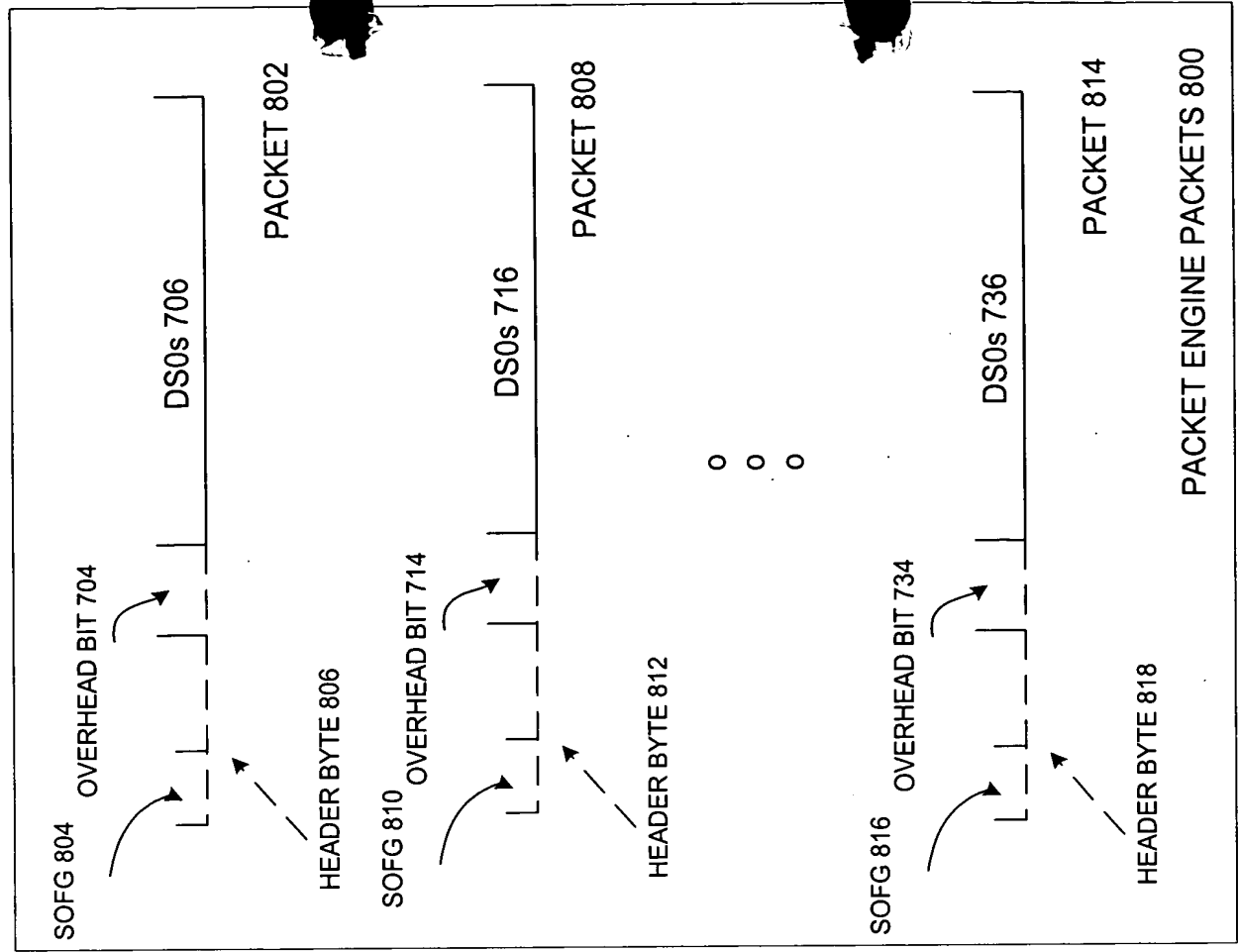


FIG. 8